GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:181
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2005
NODAL GROUP IN WTO
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Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is forging ties with 22 developing countries to form a nodal group to fight the increasing pressure from developed countries within the WTO;

(b) if so, whether India has decided to present the revised offer on negotiations in the general council of the WTO in 2005 relating to market access; and

(c) if so, the details of the revised offer on negotiations relating to market access?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN)

(a): In the run up to the Cancun Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), India, together with Brazil, South Africa and other developing countries, formed an alliance, now called the G-20, basically to ensure that the objectives of the Doha Ministerial Conference, reflected in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, for substantial reduction in the trade-distorting domestic support, elimination of export subsidies and substantial improvements in market access, while securing the food and livelihood security and rural development concerns of developing countries are fully met in the negotiations on agriculture under the Doha Work Programme.

(b)&(c): Under the request-offer phase of the ongoing Services negotiations, under the Doha Work Programme, India`s initial offer was circulated to WTO Members on 12 January 2004.

The decision adopted by the General Council on 1 August 2004 provides the Framework for carrying on the negotiations under the Doha Work Programme till the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the WTO scheduled to be held in December 2005. In terms of this decision, all the negotiating bodies including the Committee on Agriculture (Special Session) and the Negotiating Group on Market Access for Non-Agricultural items are continuing with the negotiations under the Doha Work Programme. No timetable has been set for finalising the modalities on Agriculture and Non-agricultural products, while for Services, it was indicated that the revised offers should be tabled by 31 May 2005.